



Land east of West Horndon

Representation

Urban Design, LVIA and Green Belt Assessment
12 February 2015



COUNTRYSIDE
Places People Love

Rummey design



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1 Introduction

Section 1: Introduction

1.1 General

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1.1 General

This report has been prepared by Rummey Design (RD) on behalf of Countryside Properties Ltd. (CPL) to provide background and evidence in support of CPL's proposals for a mixed use development at West Horndon.

The assessment forms part of a response to an invitation for formal representations in regard to Brentwood Borough Council Local Plan Strategic Growth Options Consultation. It also responds to the Dunton Garden Suburb Consultation which is being undertaken jointly by Brentwood and Basildon Borough Councils, as part of formal public consultations that run in parallel from 6 January 2015 until 17 February 2015.

1.2 Location of the sites

The two sites are located to the west of the town of Basildon in south central Essex, as illustrated by Figure 1. The boundaries of the proposed sites are within 1km of each other: Dunton Garden Suburb is directly contiguous with the western periphery of Basildon and the CPL site is to the east of the village of West Horndon.

1.3 Purpose of the report

The purpose of this document is to highlight the deliverability of the CPL's site, which is identified within an opportunity area for growth in Brentwood Borough Council's Local Plan Strategic Growth Options Consultation document (January 2015). The benefits of developing the West Horndon site is set in the context of an alternative proposal to focus such future development in the neighbouring Dunton Garden Suburb site. The report forms an appendix to representations made by Andrew Martin Associates on behalf of CPL.

Relevant issues pertinent to assessing the qualities of each site are:

- compliance with planning policy
- transport and access
- urban and landscape design principles
- landscape and visual impacts
- compliance with Green Belt statutory purposes

In this context a case can be made for the release of land such as that to the east of West Horndon which is privately owned Green Belt without any real environmental or amenity treasures. The land has been intensively farmed and has limited access and relatively little amenity value. Years of intensive farming could even be said to have had a negative environmental value by removal, for example, of key features such as hedgerows and hedgerow trees, and the increase in field sizes, with a consequential reduction in habitat and landscape value.

This document will discuss the potential significance for residential development at CPL's West Horndon site in comparison to the Dunton Garden Suburb site in terms of urban design considerations; potential landscape and visual effects; and Green Belt impacts.

For the purposes of brevity, from henceforth the land east of West Horndon is referred to as 'the CPL site' and land west of West Horndon is referenced to as 'the Icen Homes site'. Dunton Garden Suburb is referred to as its full name to reduce confusion.

1.4 Summary of content

The document is structured as follows:

- Section 1: introduction
- Section 2 approach and issue identification: outline of how the report studies have been undertaken and what are the key issues raised
- Section 3 baseline and background: general information regarding each of the West Horndon and Dunton Garden Suburb sites, including landscape character baseline, viewpoints, and scheme descriptions. Key differences and similarities are highlighted
- Section 4 urban design assessment: using a schedule of questions that address key factors that ensure design quality, the CPL and Dunton Garden Suburb sites are evaluated in turn and compared
- Section 5 landscape and visual appraisal: using the baseline and scheme descriptions included in Sections 3 and 4, the impacts and effects of each of the sites appraised
- Section 6 Green Belt assessment: the landscape character and visual effects of each scheme with regards to the five statutory purposes of the Green Belt evaluated and compared in terms of significance
- Section 7 conclusions: summarising the relative differences in terms of urban design, landscape and visual impact, and Green Belt impacts

Section 1: Introduction

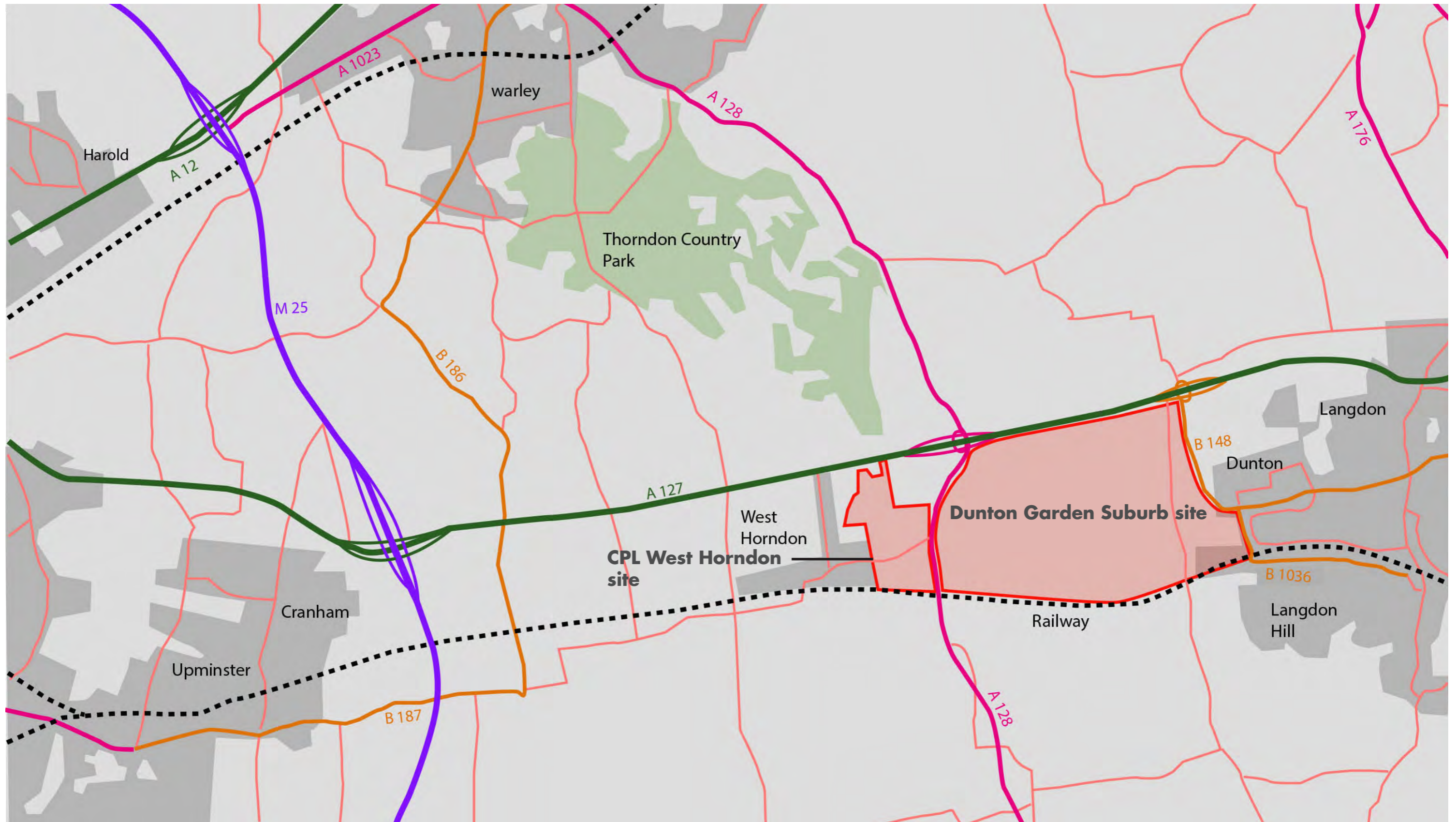


Figure 1 Location plan
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2 Approach & issues identification

Section 2: Approach & methodology

2.1 General approach

2.2 Review of background & evidence

2.3 Methodology

2.4 Landscape and visual impact assessment approach and methodology

2.5 Green Belt review approach

2.1 General approach

This section provides an explanation of the approach and methods used to undertake this assessment. It also outlines key issues in more detail, providing an explanation of the assessments direction and focus.

The report does not set out the definitive answers to issues that comparisons raise: it does, however, highlight concerns and implications regarding the application of urban design criteria, the landscape and visual environment, and the Green Belt relative to each site. In regard to urban design, it evaluates how desirable a place in which each site would be to live; how accessible and buildable they would be, and how deliverable in terms of sustainability and desirability. In terms of landscape and visual impacts, the assessment reviews how acceptable each site would be in terms of magnitude of changes to character and views. Finally, in regards to the Green Belt, the assessment weighs up the relative impacts on its statutory purposes of each site.

The following steps have been taken to carry out a comparison for each of the West Horndon and Dunton Garden Suburb opportunity sites:

- review of background and evidence
- urban design audit
- landscape character and visual appraisal
- Green Belt assessment

The topics examined by this report raise a number of issues that should be addressed for successful implementation of new residential development. The report will identify the issues and state if the answers are believed to be self-evident, or if further study to assess, or resolve them is required.

2.2 Review of background & evidence

In order to enable a comparison of landscape and visual factors, Rummey Design has undertaken a summary baseline assessment of the Dunton Garden Suburb proposals in the absence of other readily available material. Documents used in the preparation of this report

are listed in Section

2.3 Methodology

Full methodology is explained in Section 8, Appendices

Urban design & masterplan assessment criteria & approach

New design guidance is provided by the National Planning Policy Framework web portal, which states a range of best practice design objectives which collectively embody that promoted by the above. These are located online at:

<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/design/>

Landscape and visual impact assessment approach and methodology

The comparison of relative landscape and visual impacts is indicative of:

- how each proposed area of development might sit with the existing character and views;
- what the major impacts might be;
- what mitigation measures are proposed to be used to reduce or eliminate these impacts; and
- residual impacts.

The assessment of the landscape character areas surrounding the two sites has been carried out as follows:

- desktop review of relevant local landscape character studies and designations as well as consideration of the existing topography and vegetation pattern;
- undertaking of site visits to assess the key landscape qualities of the area surrounding the CPL and Dunton Garden Suburb sites.

Assessments are then undertaken as follows:

- sensitivity of each landscape character area with regards to accommodating change within the development site;
- quality of each landscape character area;
- magnitude of effect of the development proposals on landscape character areas (or perception of landscape character areas for those areas the development proposal does not sit within);
- significance, nature and duration of the effect.

This assessment follows the principles contained within the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (Institute of Environmental Assessment and Landscape Institute 2013).

Green Belt review approach

Assessment of the impact of both proposals on statutory Green Belt policies and their functions at local level examines how each scheme would affect the 5 key policies in NPPF clauses in Section 9 – Protecting Green Belt land:

'79 The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

80 Green Belt serves five purposes:

- *to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;*
- *to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;*
- *to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;*
- *to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and*
- *to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.'*

3 Background & baseline

Section 3: Background & baseline

3.1 General

3.2 Landscape Character Baseline

3.3 Site Local Landscape Character

3.4 Visual Receptors

3.5 Site Visibility

3.5 Baseline Summary

3.1 General

Detailed descriptions of the landscape character at national, county local and site level are given below. All but the site level descriptions are sourced from peer-reviewed publicly available documentation. Viewpoints have been selected to approximate 'worst case' instances of views by potentially sensitive receptors located in publicly accessible areas such as roads, public rights of way (PRoWs), Byways open to all traffic, (BOATS) and public parks. Designations are taken from OS and on-line sources including www.magic.gov. For the purposes of brevity, the landscape appraisal does not undertake a repetition of description where more than one sensitive receptor site is covered by a single viewpoint or character area.

3.2 Landscape Character Baseline

National Character Areas - Combined Sites

The CPL and Dunton Garden Suburb sties lie within National Character Area NCA111 Northern Thames Basin (Natural England, July 2013). This is a diverse area, which extends from Hertfordshire in the west to the Essex coast in the east. This NCA includes the suburbs of North London, historic towns and cities such as St. Albans and Colchester, as well as new and planned towns such as Welwyn Garden City, Hatfield and Basildon.

Arable agriculture is a large industry in the area although the soil quality ranges from good to poor. The London Clay provides a poor quality soil that becomes waterlogged in winter and cracks and shrinks in summer. Better quality alluvial soils are found in areas where the Thames and other rivers in the area formed and changed position over time.

The Northern Thames Basin is an area rich in geodiversity, archaeology and history with landscapes ranging from the wooded Hertfordshire plateaux and river valleys, to the open, predominantly arable, landscapes of the Essex heathlands. Urban expansion has been a feature of this area since the 16th century and this trend increased dramatically from the mid-19th century, mainly as commuting to London from the surrounding areas became possible. This has resulted in many areas losing their rural tranquility, although this remains in parts of Essex where there is a more dispersed settlement pattern within the arable and semi-natural habitats.

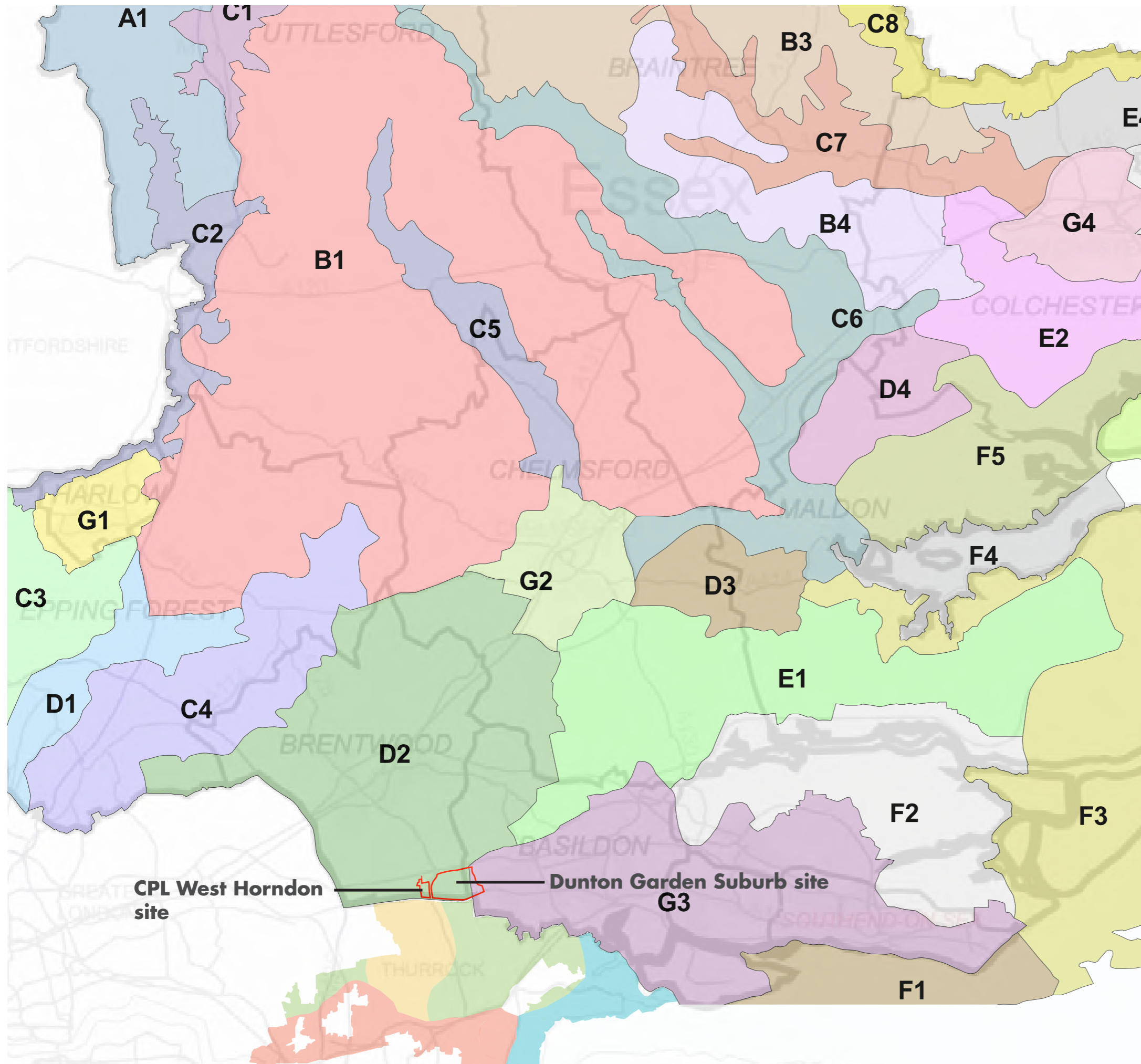
County Character Areas - Combined Sites

As illustrated by Figure 2: *Regional Landscape Character Areas*, The Essex Landscape Character Assessment, 2003 places both sites on the southern edge of LCA D2, Brentwood Hills. This area lies mainly on the London clay with soils varying. This area is characterised by gently undulating ridges and hills, and a semi-enclosed character due to a network of small woodlands, hedgerows and hedgerow trees. There is an irregular patchwork of pasture and arable and the assessment notes the dense linear settlement pattern along main roads.

Overall the assessment evaluates the landscape condition as good with Moderate sensitivity both to large-scale development and smaller-scale urban extensions. This is mainly attributed to the low to moderate intervisibility within the area although the assessment comments on the visual exposure of some hillsides and ridgetops as well as concerns over coalescence.

District Character Areas - combined sites

As illustrated by Figure 3: *District Landscape Character Areas*, West Horndon lies solely within the Horndon Fenlands LCA whilst the Dunton Garden suburb straddles administrative boundaries and so falls partly within the Horndon Fenlands LCA and partly within the Dunton Settled Claylands LCA.



Essex Landscape Character Area

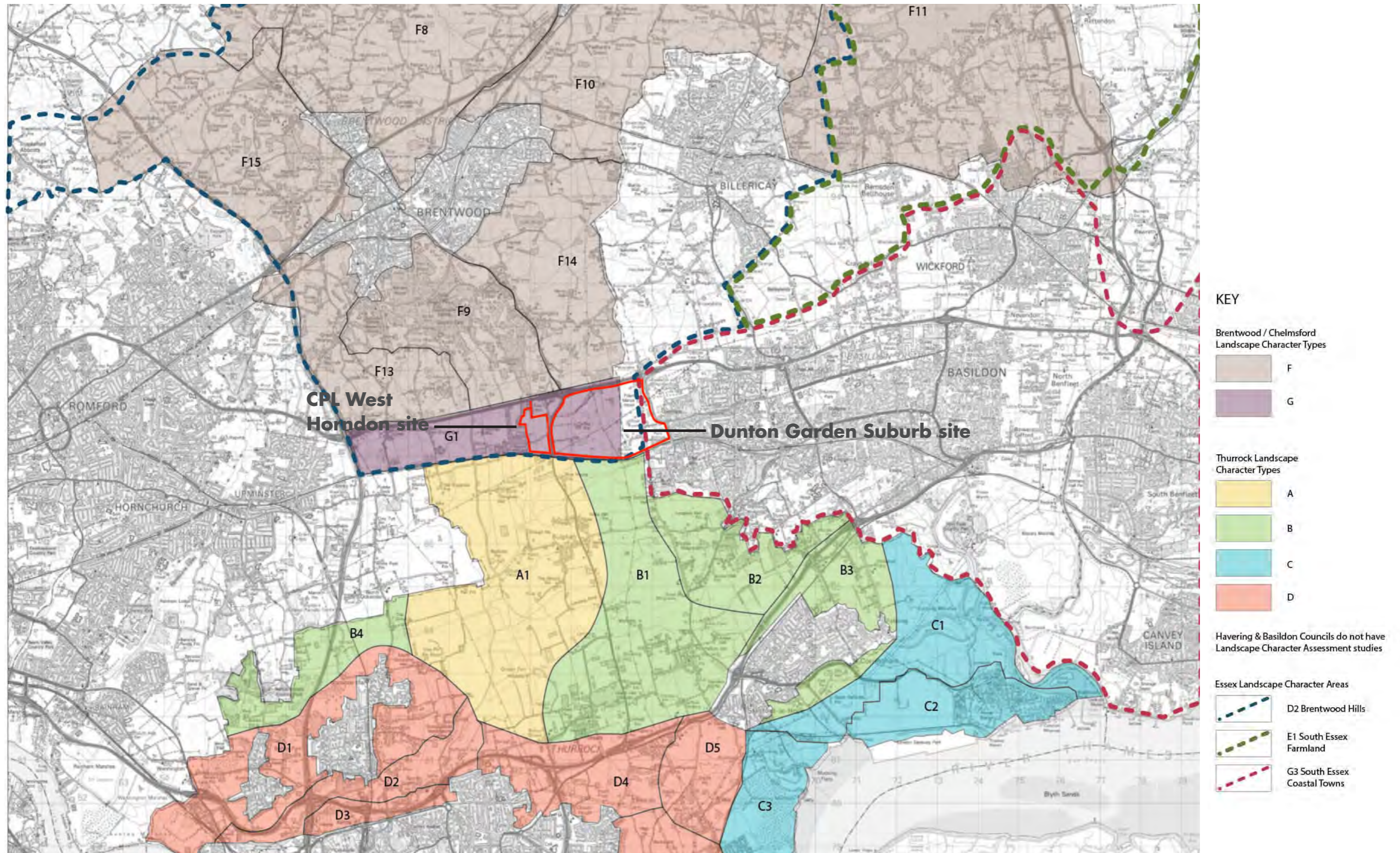
- F4: BLACKWATER ESTUARY
- C6: BLACKWATER&BRAIN VALLEY
- B3: BLACKWATER/STOUR FARMLAND
- D2: BRENTWOOD HILLS
- F7: BRIGHTLINGSEA-CLACTON-FRINTON COAST
- C1: CAM VALLEY
- B1: CENTRAL ESSEX FARMLAND
- C5: CHELMER VALLEY
- G2: CHELMSFORD & ENVIRONS
- G4: COLCHESTER & ENVIRONS
- C7: COLNE VALLEY
- F2: CROUCH&ROACH FARMLAND
- D3: DANBURY HILLS
- F3: DENGIE & FOULNESS COAST
- D1: EPPING FOREST & RIDGES
- B4: GOSFIELD WOODED FARMLAND
- F8: HAMFORD WATER
- G1: HARLOW & ENVIRONS
- C3: LEE VALLEY
- F6: MERSEA ISLAND
- F5: NORTH BLACKWATER & COLNE COASTAL FARMLANDS
- E4: NORTH COLCHESTER FARMLANDS
- B2: NORTH ESSEX FARMLAND
- C4: RODING VALLEY
- E2: SOUTH COLCHESTER FARMLANDS
- G3: SOUTH ESSEX COASTAL TOWNS
- E1: SOUTH ESSEX FARMLANDS
- C2: STORT VALLEY
- F10: STOUR ESTUARY
- F9: STOUR ESTUARY SLOPES
- C8: STOUR VALLEY
- E3: TENDRING PLAIN
- F1: THAMES ESTUARY
- D4: TIPTREE RIDGE

Thurrock Landscape Character Types

- A
- B
- C
- D
- SITE BOUNDARIES
- WH : WEST HORNDON
- DGS: DUNTON GARDEN SUBURB

Figure 2 Regional Landscape Character Types

Section 3: Background & baseline



Section 3: Background & baseline

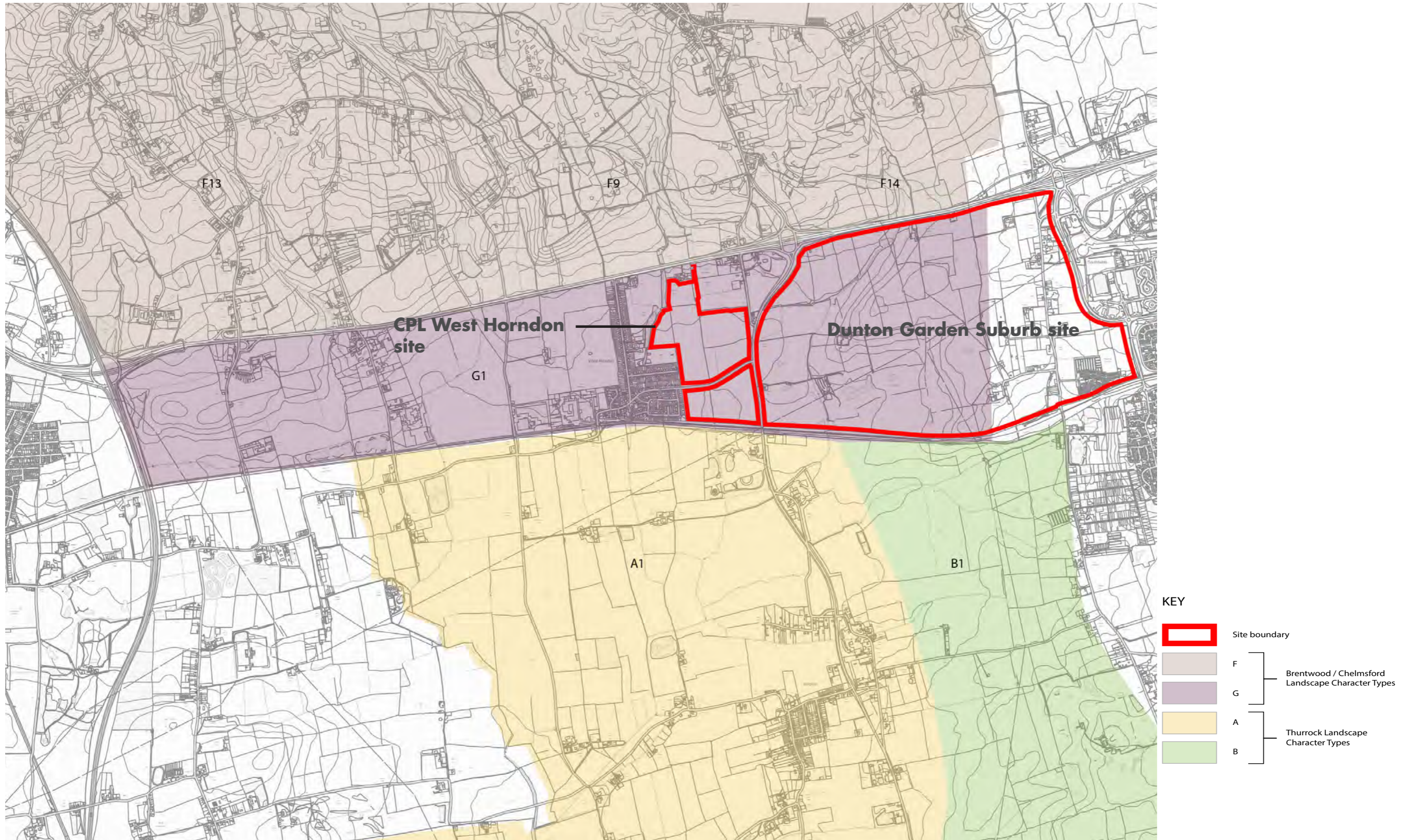


Figure 4 Local Landscape Character plan
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Section 3: Background & baseline

3.1 General

3.2 Landscape Character Baseline

3.3 Site Local Landscape Character

3.4 Visual Receptors

3.5 Site Visibility

3.6 Baseline Summary

3.3 Site Local Landscape Character

CPL Site Local Landscape Character

As illustrated by Figure 4, Local Landscape Character, at a Borough scale, identified by Brentwood Borough Council, the landscape character around West Horndon the site has been designated G1 Horndon Fenland. The characteristics include:

- large, arable pasture fields
- predominantly flat topography
- mature hedgerow field boundaries
- relatively sparse settlement pattern
- views to surrounding wooded hills to the north
- long distance views to pylons and Tilbury Power Station

The assessment notes the disturbed tranquility of this area, largely as a result of road noise. It also notes a general sense of enclosure to the north and east due to low wooded hills, but the more open views southwards to power lines and Tilbury. Landmarks include Little Warley and East Horndon churches to the north.

The historic character is one of a distinctive grid-like grain of fields, thought to be of ancient origin. Settlements tend to be nucleated. There are smaller ponds scattered in the area and some medieval moated sites.

Due to its open, flat nature, the fact that it is overlooked from the wooded hills to the north and east, and the sense of historic integrity, the assessment concludes the area to be of Moderate sensitivity to change. The Landscape Planning Guidelines suggest that any appropriate new development responds to the existing settlement pattern and uses materials which are appropriate to the local landscape character. The assessment also suggests that the setting of West Horndon needs to be conserved through careful consideration of the existing landscape structure. It identifies the need to screen visual detractors such as the industrial estate in West Horndon and recommends that the existing hedgerow network is conserved and enhanced and new woodland planting introduced in the form of shaws, copses and hedgerow trees.

At a site-specific level, the district is gridded with roads, settlement, hedges and ditches as the lower fenland has been artificially drained, occupied and farmed. Important east – west routes, either rail or road, run perpendicular to north - south drainage, settlement and hedgerow lines that mirror linear parish boundaries. The local area has largely been shaped by the natural geography; the Thames, Mar Dyke and Hole Craven Creek to the south and the Langdon/Horndon Hills to the north.

The east site comprises eight fields lying within a low-lying, level landscape, sloping imperceptibly to the north from 10-20m AOD. There is a large belt of trees associated with its northwestern flank, close to the village of West Horndon. The east site's fields are rectilinear in shape, lined by hedgerows and watercourses which follow a broadly north-south and east-west orientation. Station Road, which runs broadly in an east-west direction, splits the east site. The early field pattern system appears broadly intact. The east site backs onto a number of houses within West Horndon. The east site is bound on its northern and eastern flanks by large roads; the A127 and A128 respectively. These two roads are bounded by strong belts of vegetation which enclose the site.

The land to the west of West Horndon (the west site) comprises a mix of brownfield industrial land to the south, with an area of greenbelt arable farmland to the north. The three arable fields have a relatively weak hedgerow pattern. Its northern edge is open and marked by a low ridgeline. Its eastern boundary is marked by housing at West Horndon whilst its western edge is marked by Dunning Lane which is lined by hedgerows. The A127 lies north of the site beyond the ridgeline; a dense hedgerow and trees line the road. The site lacks an obvious northern edge to it.

Dunton Garden Suburb Site Setting and History

The study area is located directly to the west of Basildon and about 1km east of West Horndon (see Figure 2). It is accessed via the A127 and A128 and connects in to the existing village and its key community facilities of the primary school and Local Park. It comprises low-grade agricultural land which is contained and parceled by a strong and intact structure of hedgerows. The site lies to either side of the main access into West Horndon, Station Road.

The history of the land within the Dunton Garden Suburb is that typical of an agricultural landscape dating back many hundreds of years.

Dunton Garden Suburb Site Landscape Character

The Dunton Garden suburb lies within the Greenbelt on the western edge of Basildon. The site lies partly within Basildon Borough and partly within Brentwood Borough and, as a result straddles 2 character areas: the edge adjacent to the west edge of Basildon is known as Character Area 13 Dunton Settled Claylands whilst the western parts are within the Horndon Fenlands LCA which is described above.

Area 13 Dunton Settled Claylands

The Basildon Borough Council Landscape Character Assessment and Green Belt Landscape Capacity Study (BBC LCA) describes the area as follows:

'The area gently rises in the south culminating with a low hillock south west of Dunton Hall. The western boundary is marked by the Borough boundary although the same character extends further into Brentwood Borough. The southern boundary follows the railway. The northern part of the character area encompasses grazed pastures and the small settlement of Dunton Wayletts north of the A127. The urban edge of Laindon is largely well enclosed from view by dense vegetation to the east of the B148, but the A127, B148 and railway line heavily affects the tranquillity of the area. The area retains a distinctive grid-like grain to its layout, derived

Section 3: Background & baseline

3.1 General

from its medieval or earlier rectilinear field system. Built development is sporadic with dispersed lines of residential properties.'

3.2 Landscape Character Baseline

The field pattern is thought to be of Middle Saxon origin and there are medieval relics in the area including the site of a medieval church and hall complex at Dunton Hall and a former medieval moated site at the Old Rectory. The Church spire at Dunton is a local landmark.

3.3 Site Local Landscape Character

Key characteristics according to the BBC LCA are:

- *Predominantly flat landform with gentle slopes in the south towards the railway*
- *Typically medium to large sized arable fields. Medium sized paddocks are subdivided with post and barbed wire fencing*
- *Predominantly open farmland with occasional tall hedgerows forming fragmented enclosure*
- *Field boundaries delineated with some tall hedgerows, post and wire fencing and mature tree rows without hedgerows*
- *Narrow rural lanes connect dispersed roadside settlement and agricultural barns*
- *Dunton Park static caravan park occupies the south east corner of the character area*
- *Small area of mature Oak and Birch woodland north of the caravan park*
- *Church and hall complex at Dunton Hall are local landmarks*
- *Houses are predominantly 20th century with some Victorian gault brick buildings including the Old Rectory and Friern Manor*

Whilst the landscape condition is considered to be moderate to poor, the historic field pattern is intact so that the long term management prescription for this LCA is to Improve and Conserve. The management guidelines note the visual relationship of this area to the Langdon Hills that lie to the south of Basildon and that key views need to be retained.

3.4 Visual Receptors

3.5 Site Visibility

3.6 Baseline Summary

Basildon Borough Council Green Belt Study 2013

In October 2013 Basildon Borough Council undertook a Landscape Character Assessment of Greenbelt around Basildon and a Landscape Capacity Study. This further subdivided the Area 13 LCA into two areas, which were assessed for their landscape capacity to accommodate different development including residential, commercial and recreational.

Area 66 is described as:

'an area of gently sloping open farmland located west of Laindon/Basildon. The land use is a mix of predominantly rectilinear grazed pastures and arable fields divided by fragmented hedgerows, and post and wire fencing. There are areas of semi-mature woodland to the southwest adjacent to the Laindon West neighbourhood and some areas of young woodland. The B148 forms the eastern boundary separating the land area from the urban edge of Laindon/Basildon. A busy road junction lies to the north where the B148 meets the A127 and the railway line forms the southern boundary. The western boundary follows Lower Dunton Road, which divides the area from the more historic side of Dunton village within Area 67. Built development comprises Dunton Park Residential Caravan Park occupying a large site in the southeast corner and scattered roadside properties mainly to the north and agricultural barns, predominantly from the 20th century. There are no ecological designations in the area. Field boundaries are in decline resulting in the area looking in a poor condition'.

The assessment suggested that there was scope to combine areas 66 and 67 for a coordinated western extension to Basildon. However the subsequent capacity assessment yielded a final landscape capacity rating score of Low capacity, with one of the key issues affecting this rating being openness to public view.

Area 67 is described as:

'an area of predominantly open farmland located west of Laindon/ Basildon. The land slopes gently to the south, culminating with a low hillock south west of Dunton Hall. The land area's boundaries follow

the railway line to the south, the A127 to the north, the Borough boundary to the west and Lower Dunton Road to the east. Land use is predominantly rectilinear grazed pastures and arable fields divided by fragmented hedgerows, tree lines without hedgerows or post and wire fencing. Field boundaries have been lost in parts and much of the land is in a poor condition. There are no ecological designations in the area. Modern development is limited to a small amount of sporadic roadside housing. Historic buildings include the medieval church and hall complex at Dunton Hall, Friern Manor and The Old Rectory, which occupied a medieval moated site. There is also a small private fishing lake in the northern part of the area'.

There is a consented 500kw wind turbine located north of Dunton Hills Golf Course within the Dunton Garden Suburb site. This is 44m to the hub and 72m to the blade tips. When constructed, it would be the only feature of its kind within the visual envelope.

Section 3: Background & baseline

3.1 General

3.2 Landscape Character Baseline

3.3 Site Local Landscape Character

3.4 Visual Receptors

3.5 Site Visibility

3.6 Baseline Summary

3.4 Visual Receptors

The following viewpoints are located as shown in Figure 5 and panoramic photographs of each viewpoint are shown in Figure 6, viewpoints 1 - 22.

Viewpoint 1:

View westwards from Childerditch Lane south of the A127, distance from west site approx. 500m; distance from east site approx. 1100m; distance from nearest Dunton Garden Suburb development approx. 2750m; 20m AOD.

Viewpoint 2:

View westwards from the Church of All Saints, north of the junction of the A127 and A128, distance from the CPL site approx. 600m; distance from nearest Dunton Garden Suburb development approx. 1,200m; 45m AOD.

Viewpoint 3:

View westwards from Station Road west of the junction with the A128, distance from the CPL site approx. 0m; distance from nearest Dunton Garden Suburb development approx. 860m; 14m AOD.

Viewpoint 4:

Two panoramic views: north eastwards and south eastwards from Station Road east of West Horndon with the A128, distance from the CPL site approx. 0; 10m AOD.

Viewpoint 5:

View from north western edge of the community park looking northeast, distance from the CPL site approx. 0m; distance from nearest Dunton Garden Suburb development approx. 1,700m; 12m AOD.

Viewpoint 6:

A 180 degree panorama stretching southeast to south west from Octagon Plantation Country Park, distance from the CPL site approx. 700m; distance from nearest Dunton Garden Suburb development approx. 1590m; 50m AOD.

Viewpoint 7:

View southwards from public footpath within Thorndon Country Park South, distance from the CPL site approx. 600m; distance from nearest Dunton Garden Suburb development approx. 2000m; 40m AOD.

Viewpoint 8:

View southwards from public footpath within Thorndon Country Park South, distance from the CPL site approx. 800m; distance from nearest Dunton Garden Suburb development approx. 2400m; 55m AOD.

Viewpoint 9:

View northwards from Dunnings Lane, distance from the CPL site approx. 2000m; distance from nearest Dunton Garden Suburb development is more than 3km; 6m AOD.

Viewpoint 10:

View westwards from the junction of the entrance of Nuttys Farm and Childerditch Lane; distance from the CPL site approx. 1100m; distance from nearest Dunton Garden Suburb development approx. 2800m; 15m AOD.

Viewpoint 11:

Southwards from the PRoW northeast of the South Essex Golf Centre, distance from west site approx. 1000m; distance from Dunton Garden Suburb site approx. 1000m; 47m AOD.

Viewpoint 12:

View eastwards from the junction of the A128 and Station Road, east of West Horndon; distance from Dunton Garden Suburb developed area: approx. 850m; 11m AOD.

Viewpoint 13:

View eastwards from Dunton Hills Golf Club entrance, distance to Dunton Garden Suburb development approx. 870m; 15m AOD.

Viewpoint 14:

Byway to the south of A127 near Green Meadows Nursery, distance from Dunton Garden Suburb site nearest development approx. 50m; 31m AOD.

Viewpoint 15:

PRoW to the south of A127 near Green Meadows Nursery, distance from Dunton Garden Suburb site nearest development approx. 0m; 37m AOD.

Viewpoint 16:

North-south aligned PRoW traversing Dunton Hill on the hilltop towards Dunton Hall. Distance from Dunton Garden Suburb site nearest development approx. 0m; 41m AOD.

Viewpoint 17:

Access drive to Friern Farm, off of old alignment Lower Dunton Road to the south of the A127, near Brookman's Farm; distance from Dunton Garden Suburb site nearest development approx. 0m; distance from CPL site approx. 2320m; 33m AOD.

Viewpoint 18:

PRoW to the south of Church Lane near Dunton Hall and Church, distance from Dunton Garden Suburb site nearest development approx. distance from CPL site approx. 1880m; 0m; 37m AOD.

Viewpoint 19:

From Church Lane south over Dukes Farm to the rail line; distance from Dunton Garden Suburb site nearest development approx. 0m; 33m AOD.

Viewpoint 20:

View westwards from car park of Dunton Park Static Caravan Park; distance from Dunton Garden Suburb site nearest development approx. 0m; distance from CPL site approx. 2460m; 34m AOD.

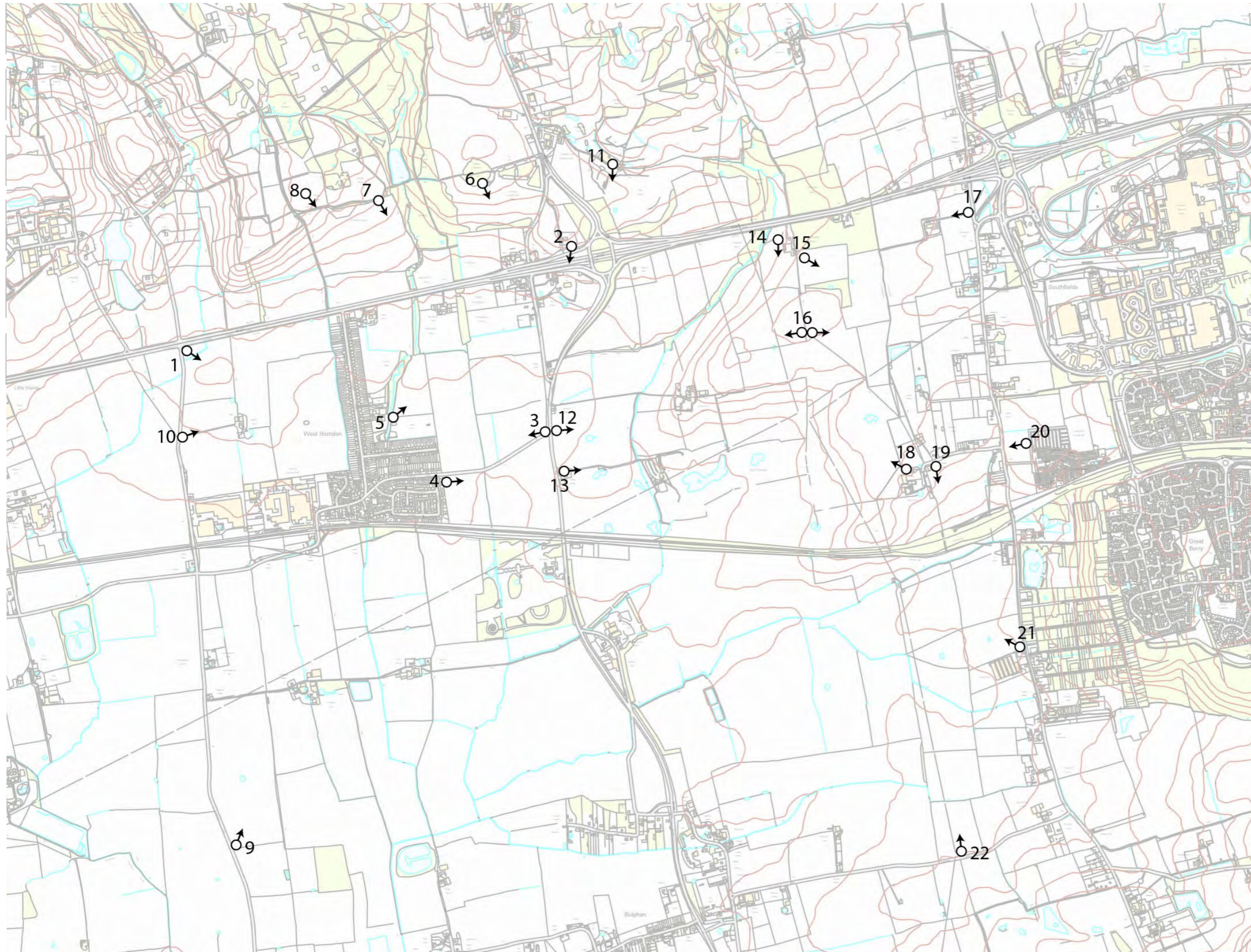
Viewpoint 21:

View westwards from car park of Dunton Plotlands Nature Reserve, distance from Dunton Garden Suburb Site approx. 150m; distance from CPL site approx. 2400m; 25m AOD.

Viewpoint 22:

View northwards from Doesgate Lane toward the Southend railway line and Dunton Garden Suburb site; distance from nearest development approx. 1,500m; 21m AOD.

Section 3: Background & baseline



Section 3: Background & baseline



Viewpoint 1: View westwards from Childeritch Lane south of the A127, distance from west site approx. 500m; distance from east site approx. 1100m; distance from nearest Dunton Garden Suburb development approx. 2750m; 20m AOD.

A relatively narrow gap in the roadside hedge affords a glimpsed view of a sloping arable field. Nuttys Farm appears just above the low ridge which blocks views to the west site. The Dunton and Langdon Hills are just visible in the mid- to far-distance above the ridgeline. Views to the east site are blocked by the vegetation associated with properties in West Horndon. The Dunton and Langdon Hills are just visible in the mid- to far-distance above the ridgeline. Views to the east site are blocked by the vegetation associated with properties in West Horndon.



Viewpoint 2: View westwards from the Church of All Saints, north of the junction of the A127 and A128, distance from the CPL site approx. 600m; distance from nearest Dunton Garden Suburb development approx. 1,200m; 45m AOD.

The view westwards from near the Church of All Saints looking towards West Horndon affords a partial view of the east site and the industrial sheds west of West Horndon. The view is open and panoramic in character and includes Canary Wharf, the Shard and a power station in the far distance. The rolling hills of the Thorndon Country Park South frame the view to the north. The view is typically semi-rural in character. It is dominated by the A127 and the Halfway House services. The noise of the A127 detracts from the quality of the view. A dense network of vegetation dominates the mid ground of the view. The vegetation partially screens the CPL site; the high ground of the Dunton Garden Suburb site is visible over mid-distant screening trees.

The high ground of the Dunton Garden Suburb site is visible over mid-distant screening trees the view eastwards from near the Church of All Saints.

Section 3: Background & baseline



Viewpoint 3: View westwards from Station Road west of the junction with the A128, distance from the CPL site approx. 0m; distance from nearest Dunton Garden Suburb development approx. 860m; 14m AOD.

The view looking westwards along Station Road is dominated by the road and a low clipped hedge to the south and a taller hedgerow to the north. The hedgerows blocks views of the fields of the CPL site.

The Dunton Garden Suburb site is not visible.



Viewpoint 4: Panoramic view eastwards from Station Road east of West Horndon with the A128, distance from the CPL site approx. 0; distance from nearest Dunton Garden Suburb development approx. 1,700m; 11m AOD.

The view to the north side of Station Road is glimpsed between fencing for new housing and the existing hedgerow. It is open in character; the foreground is dominated by a level, open field surrounded by a low hedgerow to the south and a taller one to the north. The Dunton and Langdon Hills are just visible in the mid to far distance. The row of pylons that traverse the Dunton Garden Suburb site and the railway embankment intersecting Lower Dunton Road (B1007) cross the view in the mid-distance. The southern portion of the CPL site is clearly visible in the view to the south side of the station road. The fields within the northern portion of the CPL site are blocked by a tall hedgerow. Pylons and hilltops within the Dunton Garden Suburb site are visible to the east.

Section 3: Background & baseline



Viewpoint 5: View from north western edge of the community park looking northeast, distance from the CPL site approx. 0m; distance from nearest Dunton Garden Suburb development approx. 1,700m; 12m AOD.

The view looking northeast affords open views of the east site. The view comprises an open, level arable field which is framed by trees to the east and a hedgerow in the far distance. The high ground of the Dunton Garden Suburb site is visible over mid-distant screening trees the view eastwards



Viewpoint 6: A 180 degree panorama stretching southeast to south west from Octagon Plantation Country Park, distance from the CPL site approx. 700m; 50m AOD.

Pylons and hilltops within the Dunton Garden Suburb site are visible to the east.

The view features a characteristic mix of both rural and urban elements encompassing the Kent Hills, Langdon Hills as well as a number of power stations, factories and the Dartford Crossing. West Horndon is clearly visible in the mid ground of the view. The foreground of the view comprises a large area of amenity grassland enclosed by hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees. The CPL site can be seen in the mid-ground of the view but only appears as a relatively small element within the overall view and is visually broken up by existing vegetation within the site and off-site. The West Horndon Industrial Park sheds are visible. Pylons and hilltops within the Dunton Garden Suburb site are visible to the east.

Section 3: Background & baseline



Viewpoint 7: View southwards from public footpath within Thorndon Country Park South, distance from the CPL site approx. 600m; 40m AOD.

An open, panoramic view, it encompasses the hills of Kent and the chimney and towers of the Thames Estuary. Both sites are just visible in the mid ground of the view amidst a network of trees. However roadside planting on the A127 screens a large proportion of both sites. The foreground of the view is dominated by a large arable field. Pylons and hilltops within the Dunton Garden Suburb site are visible to the east.



Viewpoint 8: View southwards from public footpath within Thorndon Country Park South, distance from the CPL site approx. 800m; distance from nearest Dunton Garden Suburb development approx. 2400m; 55m AOD.

The open, panoramic view encompasses the hills of Kent and the factories and power stations of the Thames estuary. The house within West Horndon and their associated vegetation appears at the centre of the view. Portions of the east site are visible however these appear as relatively insignificant elements of the view. The west site by contrast appears as an open, large field in the centre of view. The lack of vegetation, associated with the west site's northern flank, renders the site particularly open and visible.

Section 3: Background & baseline



Viewpoint 9: View northeast from Dunnings Lane, distance from the CPL site approx. 2000m; distance from nearest Dunton Garden Suburb development is more than 3km; 6m AOD.

This northward looking view encompasses the hill ridge of the Thorndon Country Park South to the north. The foreground of the view is dominated by Dunnings Lane which is enclosed by hedgerows on either side which restrict the openness of the view. Neither site can be seen.



Viewpoint 10: View westwards from the junction of the entrance of Nuttys Farm and Childerditch Lane; distance from the CPL site approx. 1100m; distance from nearest Dunton Garden Suburb development approx. 2800m; 15m AOD.

This view is an open semi-rural view. Views to Jury's Hill are possible to the north, whilst the industrial sheds of West Horndon can be seen to the south. Views of the tops of Dunton Hills and the associated power line pylons are possible just below the horizon; Langdon Hills are also visible in the far distance. Views to the CPL site are not possible. Mid-distant views of the tops of Dunton Hills and the associated power line pylons are possible to the east. Langdon Hills are also visible in the far distance. Views to the CPL site are not possible.

Section 3: Background & baseline



Viewpoint 11: Southwards from the PRoW northeast of the South Essex Golf Centre, distance from west site approx. 1000m; distance from Dunton Garden Suburb site approx. 1000m; 47m AOD.

The panoramic view sweeps south towards Dunton Garden Suburb site over Eastlands Spring and the tree-lined and screened A127 towards East Horndon, Thorndon Park South and Dunton Hills. Basildon/Langdon Hills is visible in the distance. Dunton Hills Farm is visible to the west. The CPL site is not visible and is screened by landform and vegetation.



Viewpoint 12: View eastwards from the junction of the A128 and Station Road, east of West Horndon; distance from Dunton Garden Suburb developed area: approx. 850m; 11m AOD.

The view comprises open arable fields in the foreground. Dunton Hill Farm is visible on the skyline in the mid-distance. Dunton Hill ridgelines lie behind the farmhouse and this runs through to the Dunton Hills Golf Club the south. The view is cumulative with CPL site 180 degree to the west (see viewpoint 3 above). The view is cumulative with CPL site 180 degrees to the west (see viewpoint 3 above).

Section 3: Background & baseline



Viewpoint 13: View eastwards from Dunton Hills Golf Club entrance, distance to Dunton Garden Suburb development approx. 870m; 15m AOD.

The view is of open well maintained golf fairways and greens without hedgerows or trees in the near to mid-distance; the south the golf club driveway leads to a group trees in which the club house is just visible. The view is cumulative with CPL site 180 degrees to the west.



Viewpoint 14: Byway to the south of A127 near Green Meadows Nursery, distance from Dunton Garden Suburb site nearest development approx. 50m; 31m AOD.

The view is up hill toward Dunton Hill ridge, framed by substantial hedgerow trees. A substantial over grown hedgerow follows the north-south alignment of the PRoW to the east of the view, south of Green Meadows Nursery. There is no view of the CPL site from this location.

Section 3: Background & baseline



Viewpoint 15: PRoW to the south of A127 near Green Meadows Nursery, distance from Dunton Garden Suburb site nearest development approx. 0m; 37m AOD.

The view to the southeast affords open views of the northernmost area of the Dunton Garden Suburb site; an open field surrounded by mature hedgerows on all sides, this is an attractive area that is relatively contained from the otherwise wide and open farmland landscape. It helps to buffer the A127 to the north, screening views of the busy traffic. Views are therefore connected with the wooded upland to the north of the A127. There is no view of the CPL site from this location.



Viewpoint 16a: North-south aligned PRoW traversing Dunton Hill, diverting northwest-southeast on the hilltop towards Dunton Hall. Distance from Dunton Garden Suburb site nearest development approx. 0m; 41m AOD.

From a high point within the Dunton Garden Suburb site, the PRoW affords 360 degree panoramic views that encompass views of the South Essex Golf Club driving range and wooded fairways to the north, the urban fringe and factories of Basildon to the east, extensive and open fields to the south with the church and building of Dunton Hall visible amongst woodland, and beyond that the tree-lined Southend railway embankment and Langdon Hills.

Section 3: Background & baseline



Viewpoint 16b: North-south aligned PRoW traversing Dunton Hill, diverting northwest-southeast on the hilltop towards Dunton Hall. Distance from Dunton Garden Suburb site nearest development approx. 0m; 41m AOD.

To the west, pylons and power lines dominate the near view as well as leading the eye to the distant Thorndon Country Park to the north. Although there is a further slight rise in ground, Dunton Hills farmhouse is visible within the mid-distance woodland and hedgerows, the CPL site and West Horndon can be glimpsed in the far-distance.



Viewpoint 17: Access drive to Friern Farm, off of old alignment Lower Dunton Road to the south of the A127, near Brookman's Farm; distance from Dunton Garden Suburb site nearest development approx. 0m; distance from CPL site approx. 2320m; 33m AOD.

The foreground view is of open arable farmland; farm buildings surrounded by mature trees and hedgerows; and a distant low wooded skyline to the west. To the north, the fast moving traffic of the A127 can be glimpsed between trees lining the route, together with the southern section of the Thorndon Country Park; beyond that is the rise in ground on which the South Essex Golf Centre is located, overlooking the Dunton Garden Suburb site from the north. There is no view of the CPL site from this location.

Section 3: Background & baseline



Viewpoint 18: PRoW to the north of Church Lane near Dunton Hall and Church, distance from Dunton Garden Suburb site nearest development approx. distance from CPL site approx. 1880m; 0m; 37m AOD.

The view is of an open field surrounded by substantial/overgrown hedgerows. To the west is the listed Dunton church, which is possibly of medieval origin. To the east, the fine contemporary Dukes Farm farmhouse and farm buildings are visible. Dunton Hills are visible in the mid-distance, and beyond these, the wooded upland of Thorndon Country Park can be seen on the horizon. The Church of All Saints at East Horndon and the Octagon are also just visible.



Viewpoint 19: From Church Lane south over Dukes Farm to the rail line; distance from Dunton Garden Suburb site nearest development approx. 0m; 33m AOD.

The view from Church Lane to the south is of farm fencing and hard standing in the foreground, with an open arable field leading down hill towards the wooded embankment of the Southend railway. Encompassing Dunton Plotlands Nature Reserve, the wooded flanks of Langdon Hills can be seen beyond, intermingled with urban development of Great Berry.

Section 3: Background & baseline



Viewpoint 20: View westwards from car park of Dunton Park Static Caravan Park; distance from Dunton Garden Suburb site nearest development approx. 0m; distance from CPL site approx. 2460m; 34m AOD.

The view westward from the visitors' car park of the Caravan Park is of an open arable field, woodland and hedgerow trees, terraced cottages/Rectory on Church Lane, and glimpses of Dukes Farm sheds. Beyond can be seen the ridgeline of the Dunton Hills and the Old Rectory can also be glimpsed to the northwest amongst trees.



Viewpoint 21: View westwards from car park of Dunton Plotlands Nature Reserve, distance from Dunton Garden Suburb Site approx. 150m; distance from CPL site approx. 2400m; 25m AOD.

This view looking west features both level and rolling arable fields which are dissected by the London to Southend Railway. Views to the CPL site are blocked by a low ridgeline running through the Dunton Hills Golf Club. The Dunton Garden Suburb site, including Dunton Hall, the church, Dukes Farmhouse and associated farm building sand sheds, and Dunton Hill Farmhouse are visible beyond the railway embankment in the mid- and far-distance.

Section 3: Background & baseline



Viewpoint 22: View northwards from Doesgate Lane toward the Southend railway line and Dunton Garden Suburb site; distance from Dunton Garden Suburb site nearest development approx. 1,500m; 21m AOD.

A panoramic view, it illustrates the level of visibility of the Dunton Garden Suburb site from flat areas to the south. The foreground to mid-distance is comprised of arable fields with two lines of hedgerows and hedgerow trees traversing east to west in front of the wooded railway embankment; these are below the line of sight of Dunton Hall, the church and Dukes Farm buildings which are visible on the shallow ridgeline in the mid-distance beyond. A line of high voltage power line pylons leads the eye towards the Thorndon Country Park hills and woodland visible to the north in the far distance.

Section 3: Background & baseline

3.1 General

3.2 Landscape Character Baseline

3.3 Site Local Landscape Character

3.4 Visual Receptors

3.5 Site Visibility

3.6 Baseline Summary

3.5 Site Visibility

CPL Site Visibility Summary

The combination of a well established network of hedgerows and hedgerow trees with the low level topography of the land causes a significant limitation to views of the east site from the surrounding land to the south, east and west. The west site is more visible because the network of hedgerows is less established and there is little definition of the northern edge.

Open views of both the CPL and Dunton Garden Suburb sites are possible from the footpaths and public access land associated with the Thorndon County Park South. These views are sensitive and frequented by many visitors. Nonetheless a mix of both rural and urban elements defines the expansive views experienced from Thorndon Country Park South. Industrial elements such as chimneys and factories and infrastructure elements such as bridges and large roads define the character of the views from the park.

Existing vegetation within the CPL site and the Thorndon Country Park South limits the visibility of the CPL site from western sections of the Country Park.

Dunton Garden Suburb Site Visibility Summary

The scale of the Dunton Garden Suburb site inevitably means there is a variety of characteristics and character throughout the site, although it is dominated by a series of shallow hills, most of which are agricultural fields uncovered by woodland and unscreened by hedgerows. The site is visible from Public Rights of Way (PRoWs) within 1km to the north of the A127, one of which that passes by the South Essex Golf Centre at height of 55m AOD. The topography rises from 30m AOD on the A127 to a high point of 41m AOD on a shallow hill to the northeast of Dunton Hills Farm. There are views of the site from the PRoW that traverses the site south from Green Meadows Nursery on the A127. In a landscape that is generally level, such a rise in land is visually significant. Views from the A128 are limited by a swathe of woodland that follows a Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT) and a small stream that eventually discharges into Mar Dyke some 2

km to the south. However, the views from the PROW at 40m AOD northeast of Dunton Hills Farm are extensive: the Octagon and open fields within the Thornton Country Park to the northwest are clearly visible, as is the Church of All Saints north of the A127 and A128 junction. Views to the south are also extensive, with much of the land between the site and the Thames Estuary open to view. The cranes and warehouse of Thurrock, Grays and Southend are also visible. The wooded Dunton Plotlands Nature Reserve and residential area further east are visible due to the rise in land; Lincewood Nature Reserve, sitting at a height of 90m AOD, and woodland around the transmission mast on Westly Heights at 99m is also clearly visible from the PROW.

To the east, there are relatively fewer impediments to the view from B1007 running north south from the A127 to A13, some 5km to the south. Dunton Hall church and the vicinity of the hills northeast of Dunton Hills Farm, are extensively visible from Dunton Plotlands Nature Reserve entrance which is south of the railway, despite the 8m high intervening railway embankment.

To the south, again there are few screening hedgerows impeding views from either the railway, which runs east-west forming the southern boundary of the site, or from Doesgate Lane 1.6km to the south.

Views from the A128 to the west of the Dunton Garden Suburb site are constrained by hedgerows of much of its route between the junction with the A127 and the village of Bulphan to the south. However, there are panoramic views from the entrance of Dunton Hills Golf Club and the Old Mill Cottages to the east across the open farmland and fairways towards Dunton Hills Farm and the shallow hill and ridgeline beyond. North of the railway land combines to significantly limit visibility of the CPL site from the surrounding land to the south, east and west. The west site is more visible due to a less well-established network of hedgerows and no defined northern edge.

Open views of both sites are possible from the footpaths and public access land associated with the Thorndon Country Park South. These views are sensitive and frequented by many visitors. Nonetheless the expansive views experienced from Thorndon Country Park South

are defined by a mix of both rural and urban elements. Industrial elements such as chimneys and factories and infrastructure elements such as bridges and large roads define the character of the views from the park.

There are two high voltage power transmission lines traversing the site that are clearly visible within most of the key viewpoints of the site. While the Dunton hills present an outlying northern edge to the fenland of the northern Thames basin, acting as a significant demarcation of a change of landscape character, the pylons introduce an equally powerful feature that overlies and impact upon the natural landscape character and views at distance. They affect the Dunton Garden Suburb site to a much greater extent than the West Horndon site.

3.6 Baseline Summary

- CPL site has a moderate landscape character sensitivity because of moderate quality, and moderate to low visibility.
- Dunton Garden Suburb site has a high landscape character sensitivity with key issues affecting this rating being openness to public view and the juxtaposition to a Special Landscape Area.